

A high quality education is vital for each American student and critical to our nation's future. The United States has among the highest per-pupil expenditures, yet our education system is not where it needs to be.

I believe improving our education system depends largely on increased parental involvement, school choice, dedicated teachers, and greater accountability.

No Child Left Behind

This year, Congress has the opportunity to make important changes to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and improve our nation's K-12 education system. While I agree with the goals set forth in NCLB, namely that every child has the potential to learn and that schools need to be held accountable, I disagree with the level of involvement of the federal government and its one-size-fits-all mandates. States and local communities need the flexibility to develop innovative and targeted solutions that address the unique educational needs of communities. I have cosponsored the [A Plus](#)

[Act](#), which would free states from the federal requirements often tied to federal education funding while maintaining accountability to parents and taxpayers.

Most importantly, control needs to be in the hands of the people who actually know what is best for children - parents - not bureaucrats in Washington. I strongly support achieving that end by giving parents the choice and necessary resources to send their children to a private, public, parochial, or charter school of their choice.

Higher Education

Rapidly increasing costs of higher education have made attaining a college degree nearly unattainable for many Americans. To keep college affordable and accessible, the federal government has continually increased spending on financial aid.

Over the past ten years, federal financial aid has increased 84%, from \$52 billion to \$95.9 billion, yet tuition prices continue to rise, leaving college still unaffordable for many Americans.

I believe one important step we could take to slow the increase in costs is to encourage schools to create greater financial transparency, which would allow students and taxpayers to see where their money is being spent, and ultimately create more accountability.

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